



City of Maricopa's
“Boxes for the Brave”

Providing Food Boxes to Our Active Duty Military on Deployment

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**Instruction Page**  
**October 2014**

What you need to know about preparing and shipping boxes of food, provisions, and supplies to our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines around the world.



## Boxes for the Brave 2014

Join Councilmember Bridger Kimball in supporting members of the armed forces currently deployed around the world by supporting Councilmember Kimball's Boxes for the Brave Program. Below is everything you need to know to send a food box to our soldiers, sailors, airman, and marines in the field.

### Overview:

To send a food box to a service member, you need to accomplish the following steps:

- Identify a recipient
- Determine the APO/FPO Address
- Determine What to Send (and What Not to Send!)
- Gather items
- Package items
- Postage and Shipping

### Identify a Recipient:

By picking up this packet we assume you have a soldier in mind for this food box. Be sure to have his or her full name, rank, and APO/FPO address. If you do not have someone in mind, you can ask your friends, neighbors, or coworkers for contact information for local soldiers. You may also contact the Maricopa Blue Star Moms who have many additional contacts.

### APO/FPO Addresses:

In order to mail any type of packages or correspondence to deployed military members, you need to know their APO (Army Post Office)/FPO (Fleet Post Office) address. If you have a name but no APO/FPO, you should work through your channels to get this information. Be sure you have the most current APO/FPO, because soldiers move around a lot.

### What to Send:

Below is a list of what to send and what NOT to send courtesy of Maricopa Blue Star Moms and [www.give2thetroops.org](http://www.give2thetroops.org)

#### PLEASE NOTE:

- Canned food is not allowed
- Leave all items in their original packages
- Choose the latest expiration date possible

#### FOOD, SNACKS AND DRINKS:

- Beef Jerky!!!
- Slim Jims!!
- Trail mix!
- Soup / Top Ramen



- Coffee (ground, vacuum pak bags)
- Power bars or Energy bars
- Presweetened powdered drink mixes (Gatorade, Kool-Aid...)
- Candy bars (no chocolate from mid-March to late October)
- Boxed cookies
- Chewing gum
- Hard candy
- Rice Krispy bars
- Crackers – Saltines Wheat Thins -Ritz crackers -Graham crackers
- Granola bars
- Pop Tarts
- Sunflower seeds & pumpkin seeds
- Hard pretzels - Cheetos - Fritos - Chex Mix -
- Fig Newton's - Oreos -cheese & crackers - small packs
- Dried fruit, granola, fruit roll-ups - fruit by the foot - fruit gummies
- Peanuts, mixed nuts (salted preferred)
- Popcorn
- Tuna & chicken salad (in foil pouches, or ready-to-eat kits (no cans)
- Microwave food (Chef-boy-r-dee, stews, etc.)
- Girl Scout cookies
- Little Debbie's & Hostess cake products
- Cereal (small, individual boxes)
- Condiments, spices; sugar; salad dressing (no glass jars)

**TOILETRIES: (Please, NO HOTEL SAMPLES!)**

- Chapstick, Tissues, and Shaving Cream in tubes
- Lip Balm / Chap Stick / Carmex / Blistex
- Body Wash, Liquid Soap, Facial Cleanser
- Hair Gel (for female troops to pull hair back)
- Combs / Brushes / Bobby Pins (in original packaging, please)
- Deodorant (travel size) / Shaving Cream in Tubes / Shaving Soap (No CANS of Shaving Cream!) Hand & Body Lotion / Moisturizer (travel size)
- Sunblock, SPF 45, Zinc, Vitamin E, Aloe Vera Gel
- Bug Spray / DEET / Skin-So-Soft
- Breath Mints / Breath Strips / Mouthwash (travel size)
- Lozenges / Cough Drops / Loufa Sponges / Buff Puffs
- Nail files / Emery Boards / Nail Clippers
- Tylenol, Motrin, Advil or Aspirin Packets (Please check expiration dates)
- Eye Drops (i.e. Visine) / Nasal Spray/Feminine Hygiene Products

**ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS:**

- iTunes® Gift Cards (Top request!)
- DVD Movies (new or used - recent releases )
- Xbox Games, PSP, PS2 & PS3 Games (new or used)



- Board Games
- Computer Flash Drives & Camera Memory Cards
- Portable CD players / head phones
- Electronic handheld games
- Small homemade gifts - reminders & comforts of "home"
- Small photographs or posters of scenery for their tents & walls
- Small crafts kits, scrap-booking items
- Day planners / Small, Pocket Calendars sent in Dec. & Jan.
- Game Books: (Crossword Puzzles / Word Search Books / Math Puzzle books / MAD LIBS / Logic Problems / Sudoku)
- Yo-Yo's, Dominoes, Poker Chips & Mats, Dice
- Board games (UNO, Othello, Checkers - travel size)
- Dart Boards (regular or magnetic - any size)
- Nerf footballs - Whiffle bats, balls & mitts - Sports equipment - Frisbees - hackey sacks

#### **OTHER:**

- LINENS: Pillow cases, twin sheets, towels & washcloths (green & tan)
- LAUNDRY DETERGENT/ FABRIC SOFTENER SHEETS:
- (Note: Only These Brands which do not contain Optical Brighteners)
  - "Bold" Powder
  - "Cheer" Liquid (all versions)
  - "Cheer" Powder (all versions)
  - "All" Powder (all versions)
  - "Surf" Powder (all versions)
  - "Woolite" (all versions)
- FLASHLIGHTS - SMALL (battery operated. Surefire Brand preferred)
- AIR FRESHENERS (standalone-not plug-in. Car types are also good)
- Holiday and Seasonal Decorations
- Fleece or Wool Blankets (Yes, it gets very cold)
- Disposable Hand Warmers and Foot warmers (in the wintertime)
- Winter Hats (Hand knitted hats in black, tan or green are always welcome!)
- Small toys (Beanie babies) & school supplies for foreign children
- Patriotic knick-knacks, USA flags, flags from your state, bandanas, baseball hats, football jerseys, banners to tack on their walls or tents.
- TOOLS: staple guns, paint brushes, adhesive wall hooks, wall screws, small tool kits, rubber gloves, sponges, unused rags, etc
- Dust masks, carpentry tools, Fly swatters, fly paper, mosquito netting, bug repellent in plastic pump bottles only - NO AEROSOL or PRESSURIZED CANS.
- Gun cleaning supplies (lube) such as Militec-1 & CLP
- Alarm Clocks (Small in size; wind-up or battery-operated)
- Small, portable heaters & fans (110 voltage okay)
- Water Bottles, Travel Mugs & Thermoses with Lids (for Coffee, Soup, etc)
- Coffee Makers & Filters (110 voltage okay)
- Coffee Bean Grinders - small (electric or battery-operated)
- Hot Pots - Small



- Elixir & Water Purification Tablets for Camelbaks
- Combat Application Tourniquets (black only)
- T-SHIRTS: Cotton green & tan under shirts - new (Sizes: M, L & XL)
- [Note: The DOD banned "Under-Armor" shirts due to its material being potentially flammable & bad reactions to open wounds.]
- SOCKS: Black, Olive Green & White (cotton or wool)
- CARDS & LETTERS: The troops love to hear from all of us and Mail brightens their days! Consider making a patriotic banner or poster to send along!

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND:**

- HOME-BAKED FOOD
- GLASS BOTTLES or GLASS JARS
- AEROSOL CANS, AEROSOL SPRAYS or any PRESSURIZED CANNISTERS
- EXPIRED FOOD
- CANNED FOOD
- CANDLES, LIGHTERS, MATCHES or LIGHTER FLUID
- HOTEL /AIRLINE SAMPLES
- VHS TAPES, CASSETTE TAPES
- CONTRABAND ITEMS (live plants, tobacco, alcohol, knives, nudity, etc.)
- BOOKS or MUSIC CDS (iTunes® is commonly used now)
- PRESCRIPTIONS OF ANY KIND
- USED OR STAINED CLOTHING, LINENS, TOILETRIES, ETC

## Gathering Items:

Now it is time to go shopping for your food box! Remember no canned or bottled items, no homemade or out of date foods, and nothing that will melt or perish. When shopping, take your US Post Office Flat Rate Box with you and try to ship a variety of items rather than all one thing.

## Packing Items:

Place items snugly in your box, use jolly ranches as packing material (no packing peanuts). Try to think of all different ways that things will get crushed... then pack accordingly. You will be surprised what you can fit in a single box if you get creative.

Always add an information page with the name and APO/FPO of the recipient, the date, and your return address just in case.

## Shipping and Postage....

**If you are shipping this yourself:**

We have had the best luck using the US Post Office (USPO) Large Flat Rate Box. If you are shipping on your own, seal the box with liberal amounts of a quality 3 inch wide plastic packing tape. Do all corners and seams (do NOT tape box if going through the City for shipping)



You will be shipping to an APO/FPO address which is considered a **domestic location**.

<https://www.usps.com/send/apo-fpo-dpo.htm>

For the USPO Flat Rate Boxes, you will need to complete and sign a USPO Customs Declaration and Dispatch Note CP-72, **Form 2976-A**. You will need to list the content and estimated weight of your package with as much detail as possible given the space available. This form is required to be completed.

<http://faq.usps.com/adaptivedesktop/faq.jsp?ef=USPSFAQ>

**If you are shipping this as part of the Boxes for the Brave program:**

Bring your UNTAPED USPO Flat Rate Box to the front counter at City Hall and let them know you would like to ship a food box as part of this program. Counter staff will assist you with final packing check, filling out your shipping label, completing the USPO Customs Declaration and Dispatch Note CP-72, adding a note from the Maricopa City Council, and Taping the box up tight. Once completed, City staff will deliver the box to the Maricopa Post Office and pay for shipping of the first 50 boxes. We will keep your Senders Copy of CP 72 on file. You may return to City Hall after 5 working days to retrieve your senders copy.

**If you would like to have an experienced member of the Maricopa Blue Star Moms help you with any or all of this process:**

The Maricopa Blue Start Moms have shipped dozens of food boxes to service members deployed around the world, under all conditions, from the deserts of Iraq, to Navy vessels patrolling the Pacific and military bases big and small. If this is your first time preparing a food box, have something special you are trying to accomplish, or just want to make sure your service members gets a box that will have what he or she needs (and is still in usable condition!), we encourage you to contact the Blue Star Moms and take advantage of what they have learned through trial and error.

To contact the Maricopa Blue Star Moms as part of the Boxes for the Brave Partnership please call:

Tracy Davis, Chapter President

Phone: (520) 709-0539

Email: [maricopaaz7pres@gmail.com](mailto:maricopaaz7pres@gmail.com)

Website: [www.maricopabluestarmothers.com](http://www.maricopabluestarmothers.com)

## Next Step...

**The next step in Boxes for the Brave is yours!** Now you know what to do so track down the APO/FPO of your friend and loved one; head to the store; get a USPO Flat Rate Box; go shopping, pack up the box and then bring it by City Hall for free shipping as part of Boxes for the Brave. Start today and show a deployed soldier that you honor their service and are thinking of them!

**Boxes for the Brave... Start Today!**